

# Laura L. Tansey

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## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **Attorney at Law in Private Practice**

September 2007 – present

- Provide direct representation to clients charged with capital murder and under a sentence of death with a focus on developing mitigation evidence
- Specialize in developing mitigation evidence in cases of Spanish-speaking clients

### **Reprieve, London, England**

*Legal Volunteer*, May 2007 – August 2007

- Drafted motions and performed researched as part of legal team representing dozens of Guantánamo Bay detainees.
- Conducted research and wrote paper comparing approaches to mitigation in death penalty cases in India and the United States

### **State Bar of Texas, Texas Lawyers Care, Austin, Texas**

#### **Texas Access to Justice Commission**

*Assistant Director*, March 2006 - April 2006, June 2006 – April 2007

- Awarded “Employee of the Quarter” April 2006

### **State Bar of Texas, Texas Lawyers Care, Austin, Texas**

#### **Texas Access to Justice Commission**

*Acting Director*, November 2005 - January 2006, April 2006 - June 2006

- Oversaw the development and implementation of initiatives designed to expand civil access to justice in Texas
- Worked closely with State Bar leadership, Commissioners, and Supreme Court of Texas Justices to fulfill the goals of a 5-year strategic plan to enhance the quality of justice in civil legal matters
- Supervised staff of 5 attorneys and administrative personnel

### **State Bar of Texas, Texas Lawyers Care, Austin, Texas**

#### **Texas Access to Justice Commission**

*Program Attorney*, September 2003 - October 2005

- Provided administrative support for the statewide delivery of legal services
- Instituted policies and initiatives to enhance the quality and quantity of legal services available to low-income Texans
- Spearheaded Katrina Disaster Relief efforts for the Louisiana State Bar, which brought together key leaders in the private, government, and nonprofit communities to create an organized disaster relief legal response

### **Political Asylum Project of Austin, Austin, Texas**

*Coordinating Attorney, Asylum Seekers Assistance Program*, September 2002 - August 2003

- Managed caseload of over 35 asylum cases, and other related immigration matters involving asylees and refugees
- Participated in community education and outreach activities regarding asylum, refugee, and related immigration issues
- Served as instructor for the Austin Police Department during its 2003 TCLEOSE (Texas Commission on Law Enforcement Officers Standards and Education) training on working with the immigrant community

**Political Asylum Project of Austin, Austin, Texas**

*Law clerk*, June 2000 - May 2001, September 2001 - July 2002

- Interviewed asylum seekers and prepared asylum applications; completed necessary follow-up, including legal brief writing
- Transitioned the Cuban Detention Project to this organization
- Conducted rights presentations to INS detainees
- Monitored the progress of Honduran Temporary Protected Status cases and conducted necessary follow-up with INS

**Inter-American Commission on Human Rights**

*Co-author of amicus brief*, January - June 2002

- Co-wrote legal brief which examined due process rights during deportation proceedings in Argentina

**Programa de Justicia, USAID with Checchi and Co. Consulting, Inc., Guatemala Intern**, June - August 2001

- Designed and executed study on the need for Mayan language interpreters in the Courts
- Analyzed data received from interviews with judges, interpreters, and other judicial administrators and wrote final report

**OTHER  
EXPERIENCE**

**Central Texas Immigrant Worker Rights Center, Austin, Texas**

*Volunteer Attorney*, March 2004 – December 2006

- Provide legal assistance in recovering immigrants' unpaid wages

**Austin Human Rights Commission, Austin, Texas**

*Commissioner*, April 2004 – September 2006

- Worked with fellow Commissioners to promote and enforce fair treatment of all Austin residents in the area of employment, housing, and public accommodations

**Election Protection, Houston, Texas**

*Legal Volunteer*, Fall, 2004

- Documented and rectified voting problems on Election Day, addressing the systemic neglect and/or obstruction of voting rights in African American and Latino communities

**World Food Programme, Food Aid Organization of the U.N., Rome, Italy**

*Intern for Office of Latin America and the Caribbean*, August - December 1998

- Assisted in the preparation of monthly reports and maintained records on program's response to Hurricane Mitch
- Participated in evaluation of agricultural development projects vis-à-vis U.N. standards

**Fulbright scholar, Huancayo, Peru**

*Topic: rural development policy*, 1995 - 1996

- Investigated effects of non-governmental organizations and government agencies on rural development, specifically as applied to animal husbandry projects

**EDUCATION**

**The University of Texas School of Law, Austin, Texas**

*Doctor of Jurisprudence*, May 2002

- Texas Law Fellow

- Equal Justice America Law Student Fellowship

**Cornell University**, Ithaca, New York

*Master of Regional Planning*, May 2002

- Sage Fellow

**The University of Texas at Austin**, Austin, Texas

*Bachelor of Arts in Latin American Studies with High Honors*, May 1995

- Phi Beta Kappa
- J. William Fulbright Award

**LICENSES**

**State Bar of Texas**

**LANGUAGES**

Fluent in Spanish. Proficient in Portuguese and Italian. Studied Mam (a Mayan language).

**PRESENTATIONS**

- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Matagorda County Bar Association, Bay City, Texas, November 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Wichita County Bar Association, Wichita Falls, Texas, November 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Midland County Bar Association, Midland, Texas, November 2006
- Speaker/Panel Member, "Organizing a Student Loan Repayment Assistance Program at Law Schools," National Lawyer's Guild: Law for the People Convention, Austin, Texas, October 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Galveston Young Lawyers Association, Galveston, Texas, October 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Mexican American Bar Association, El Paso, Texas, September 2006
- Speaker, "Incentives for doing Pro Bono in Texas," Pro Bono Coordinators Retreat, State Bar of Texas, Austin, Texas, September 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Jefferson County Bar Association, Beaumont, Texas, July 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice Update: Overview of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Smith County Bar Association, Tyler, Texas, May 2006
- Speaker/Panel Member, "The Legal Community's Efforts to Help Victims of National Disasters: What Have We Learned from September 11 and the Gulf Coast Hurricanes," 2006 Equal Justice Conference, Philadelphia, Penn., March 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Texarkana Bar Association, Texarkana, February, July 2006
- Speaker, "Access to Justice Update: Overview of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Kerr County Bar Association, Kerrville, Texas, January 2006
- Speaker, "Incentives for doing Pro Bono in Texas," Pro Bono Coordinators Retreat, State Bar of Texas, Austin, Texas, September 2005
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Status of Legal Services Delivery in Texas," Local Bar Leaders Conference, The Woodlands, Texas, July 2005
- Speaker, "Access to Justice: Overview of Legal Services to the Poor in Texas," Local Bar Leaders Conference, Las Colinas, Texas, July 2005
- Speaker, welcoming remarks, "The Nuts and Bolts of Removal Defense: How to Successfully Represent Your Clients in Immigration Court," sponsored by the South Texas Pro Bono Asylum Representation Project, South Padre Island, Texas, February 2005

